Review of the Communications Function

Prepared for the Audit and Evaluation Branch by

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Canada

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This Review assessed the adequacy and effectiveness of the management and coordination of key elements of the external communications function within Industry Canada. While the activities of all Sectors were reviewed, the study focussed on the Communications Branch which has responsibility for functional management.

- The Review cites a communications "model" as a performance standard. It includes a corporate vision, coherent and consistent messaging, clear roles for key players, up-front funding of communications costs and use of advanced communications technologies.

- Industry Canada is adapting to much change in government and market environments.

  - Its coin has become market intelligence and analysis.
  - Information-sharing and partnering are its way of doing business.
  - It is playing a leadership role in Canada's development and exploitation of communications technologies.

- The consensus is that communications units serving Sectors and Special Operating Agencies (SOAs) carry out specific program communications and "marketing" roles and that the Communications Branch is responsible for ministerial communications and "corporate" initiatives. As this distinction is not always clear on individual files, there can be confusion about individual roles and what is meant by "marketing" and "corporate".

- Departmental programs vary widely in their communications capacities, and rely in varying degree on the Communications Branch for communications advice, publishing, media relations and other support.

- The department benefits from strong ministerial leadership, and a clear vision of priorities championed by the Deputy Minister. Program managers bring to their responsibilities varied personal experience, views about communications and expectations of communications staff.

- The communications function at Industry Canada is one of the most decentralized in government. Some 98 IS and four EX personnel are employed in the communications units located in Sectors and SOAs. (Some of the EX personnel cited also have other responsibilities in addition to communications.) Several Sectors have more than one dedicated communications group. It is not always clear who coordinates the communications efforts within these Sectors when a Sector perspective on a specific issue is required.

- Under Program Review, the Communications Branch was reduced to 55 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) from 96. Its small management cadre is thinly stretched. It has had six Directors General (DGs) and acting DGs since 1993, and turnover has been high in other positions.

General Observations

- Industry Canada is fulfilling the primary requirements of the Government Communications Policy with no glaring policy transgressions or gaps.

- Program managers observed that the Communications Branch is hard pressed to serve the communications requirements of the Minister and responsibilities for corporate initiatives, let alone

program needs and overall coordination. The Branch's managers concurred that their staff are working very long hours under considerable stress.

- In most instances, working relationships among communications and program personnel were reported as good. But sector communicators and the Communications Branch often seem to operate in isolation from one another. At the time of this review, no regular vehicle existed to directly share information amongst communications personnel about the general directions of the department. Where contact is infrequent, the sector communicators may operate without the corporate perspective; the Communications Branch may be unaware of important sectoral communications initiatives.

- Notwithstanding the efforts of the Communications Branch in the fall of 1997 to provide information across the Department on their role, there is considerable uncertainty about communications roles and responsibilities in specific situations.

Communications Services

- ***Public opinion research***: Only one position filled on a part-time basis, is devoted to this core communications function. There is a general desire for trends analysis and more sharing of research results down, up and across the department.

- ***Communications planning***:

  - The introduction of a *strategic communications plan* for Industry Canada is welcomed. Managers see value in it to guide sector strategies and they want to be consulted in advance as the strategic plan evolves.

  - Connecting Canadians is a *corporate* initiative that provides an authentic, easily grasped umbrella concept to package related programs. It is seen as a potential model for communicating other strategic priorities.

  - There is no firm division of responsibilities for *program communications planning*, and there was some criticism of what is prepared.

- ***Communications advice***: The communications advisors assigned to sectors by the Communications Branch play critical but widely varying roles – generally to the satisfaction of their clients. Sector communicators also offer advice.

- ***Ministerial support:*** The Communications Branch is credited with a good job in the sometimes-difficult and sensitive interface role between programs and the Minister's Office. The planning of ministerial opportunities, speech-writing and the preparation of QP cards are generally seen as working reasonably well.

- ***Multimedia Services*** is a major and well-managed service for programs.

- ***Media relations:*** An effective approvals system permits the department to manage news releases with fewer problems than many departments, and the system of spokespersons conforms to preferred practice.

- ***Advertising:*** Staff cuts have limited the Communications Branch's role to providing input to the planning process, coordinating approvals and reporting as required to Public Works & Government Services Canada (PWGSC). Communications advisors have also continued

providing advisory services related to advertising initiatives. Sectors deal directly with the department's advertising agency.

- ***Events:*** The department's many public events are consistently successful.
- ***Regional communications:*** Officers face extraordinary demands to roll out departmental initiatives and support ministerial travel and events. They are well-regarded for their performance and commitment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Industry Canada is fulfilling the primary requirements of the Government Communications Policy. There is impressive evidence of dynamic and creative communications activity across the country, external partnerships in communications and aggressive integration of technology in client communications.
- At existing resource levels, there is limited room for the Communications Branch to play a stronger direct role coordinating communications or supporting programs.

Recommendations:

1. Introduce a departmental communications policy spelling out objectives, roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and communications procedures. Use the policy as the basis for negotiating service agreements in the form of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the Communications Branch and Sectors.
2. Ensure up-front funding of communications costs in new policy and program initiatives.
3. Strengthen the "communications community" within Industry Canada by seizing opportunities to bring the department's communicators together as a collective resource to "connect the dots".
4. Concentrate on use of the strategic communications plan as a working tool to support corporate priorities and increase the likelihood of consistency in messaging across the Department.
5. Consider extending the Connecting Canadians approach (i.e., the development of a corporate communications strategy for a Departmental priority) to other corporate priorities.
6. Clarify responsibilities for program communications planning and adopt a streamlined "synopsis" format for the preparation of routine communications plans.
7. Focus the work of communications advisors on key areas of service and clearly identify these to program managers.
8. Develop a broader capacity for deck/new media services and increase charges to clients, using revenues to fund additional FTEs. Priorities are communications advisors, senior branch managers, communications research and support for QP cards.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- This study was conducted by Hallux Consulting Inc. on behalf of the Audit and Evaluation Branch (AEB) as part of the 1998-99 Audit Plan. It has assessed the adequacy and effectiveness of the management and coordination of key elements of the external communications function within Industry Canada. While the communications activities in all Sectors were reviewed, the study's main focus was the Communications Branch, in recognition that the Government Communications Policy[1] makes departmental Heads of Communications "accountable to deputy heads for managing the communications function."

- Issues to be examined included:

  - the planning framework for communications;
  - the balance achieved by the Communications Branch in the provision of communications advice, planning and services;
  - the managerial framework for external communications including roles and responsibilities for ministerial support, issue management, media relations, participation in events, promotion of IC programs and services and advertising;
  - the availability and dissemination of information; and
  - the use of public opinion research to address communications needs of the department and government and to advance policy priorities.

- Several factors were identified during the planning that resulted in a refocusing of the review. These factors included:

  - It was recognized at the outset by the AEB that the approach utilized would provide limited information on the availability and dissemination of information to the public, stakeholders and Members of Parliament. An assessment of the completeness, relevance, timeliness and impact of information provided to these groups would have required consultation with them and quantitative measurement. A decision was made by the AEB not to undertake this work at this time.

  - *Strategis* and the department's electronic communications have been excluded since they were examined by the Auditor General of Canada and reported in his December 1997 report to Parliament. Industry Canada subsequently provided a status report on its follow-up action to the Public Accounts Committee last fall.

  - Public enquiries and document distribution activities were examined in detail by Hallux Consulting Inc. in the January 1998 *Review of the Enquiries/Warehousing Functions* for the Communications Branch. We believe that the key recommendation of that study – a rationalization of the two activities in cooperation with the Chief

[1] Issued by the Treasury Board Secretariat, December 1, 1996.

Information Office – remains valid and essential. This recommendation was not considered acceptable within the Department and hence, not implemented.

- This study focussed on the communications function within Industry Canada and only indirectly considered communication issues across agencies within the Industry Portfolio that are coordinated by the Industry Portfolio Office.

- In carrying out the review, Hallux team members reviewed and analyzed relevant documents (Annex A) and interviewed 98 executives, senior program managers and communicators, Regional Executive Directors (REXDs) and regional communicators (Annex B) in fifty-eight interviews and five different group sessions. Industry Canada experience was compared in several respects with a number of other departments.

- Much of the information that the report is based on was collected during the period January to February 1999.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 A changing communications environment

- Federal government communications practices have changed significantly in the 1990s.

  - Deficit concerns and expenditure restraint have altered radically how spending is characterized in government messaging, created a new emphasis on partnering with outside organizations, and reduced the capacity of communications groups to engage in traditional large-scale publishing and advertising.

  - Dramatic advances in technologies have made satellite communications and the Internet routine considerations in the way announcements are packaged by the government and treated by the media.

  - The government's communications with "general" publics, as distinct from "client" publics, are more heavily dependent than ever on the news media and the indiscriminate use of news release

- Communications structures in public and private sector organizations have been decentralized and flattened. Communications has been recognized more widely as a management function that requires shared leadership between program and policy managers on the one hand and professional communicators on the other. Most organizations now buy much of their technical and even strategic support from external sources. Two-way technologies are being used increasingly to gain feedback, consult clients and increase the transparency of operations.

- The communications community in the federal government faces significant human resource challenges. Because of significant cutbacks and spending restraints over the past decade, little "new blood" has entered the community. Retirements of senior communicators are now creating vacancies with few qualified people available to fill them. The *La Relève* initiative to address this challenge is just beginning to have an impact. In the meantime, departments are "poaching" good people from one another. It is likely that those departments offering better working conditions and higher classification levels are landing the best candidates.

2.2 A communications model

- Based on our experience working with and consulting for numerous government departments, we believe the characteristics of optimal communications for government departments may be described as follows:

  - a corporate vision that embraces everyone's work within a limited number of priorities;
  - coherent and consistent messaging and communications activity responding to these priorities;
  - clear roles and responsibilities for the key players;

- N up-front funding of communications costs associated with new and ongoing corporate and program support; and
- N leading-edge use of communications technologies.

- There is no universally implemented organization structure for the provision of communications services both in overall numbers or in proportionately, the number of resources in each category. (See Annex C for a comparison of the structure and resources utilized by different government departments.)

- Our analysis and recommendations in this report are directed at helping Industry Canada move closer to this model.

2.3 Change at Industry Canada

2.3.1 Programs

- Industry Canada manages a unique range of policies and programs. It could be argued that the diversity and complexity of programs create a communications challenge unparalleled among government departments. Moreover, the Minister is looking for coordination amongst the Department and the Agencies for which he is responsible, which adds to the complexity. The Communications Branch is responsible for developing a departmental perspective and providing it to the Industry Portfolio Office which in turn, must coordinate with the Agencies within the Portfolio to arrive at a consensus.

- In an environment where traditional dollar incentives to industry are no longer available, the department's coin has become market intelligence and analysis.

- Information-sharing and partnering are the new way to do business. The value that Industry Canada places on both is indicated in the emergence of its Special Operating Agencies (SOAs), its working relationships with private sector organizations, and the emphasis on cooperation within the Industry Portfolio.

- The department's national leadership role in Canada's development and exploitation of communications technologies is reflected in its own aggressive use of Internet communications with program clients.

2.3.2 Communications

- The communications function at Industry Canada is one of the most decentralized in government. Almost three-quarters of the department's IS positions are located in (and report to) Sectors, SOAs, and Regions, with the remainder in the department's Communications Branch.

- There is a working consensus within the department that communications units serving Sectors and SOAs carry out specific program communications and "marketing" roles and that

the Communications Branch is responsible for ministerial communications and "corporate" initiatives. As this distinction is not always clear on individual files, there can be confusion about individual roles and what is meant by "marketing" and "corporate".

- Programs vary widely in their communications capacities. A number of sector programs rely on the Communications Branch for considerable communications advice, publishing, media relations and other direct program communications support. Other areas are essentially self-reliant.

2.4 The Players

2.4.1 Minister

- We believe that Industry Canada benefits immeasurably from strong and stable ministerial leadership. The Minister is an experienced, active communicator who personally make scores of speeches and presentations at a variety of venues.

- Knowledgeable communications leadership is also exerted from the Minister's office.

2.4.2 Deputy Minister

- The Deputy Minister champions a vision for Industry Canada within and beyond the department. The vision sets out five priorities – connectedness, innovation, trade, investment and marketplace frameworks – which are established through the *Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP)*. These priorities are incorporated into the Portfolio's strategic communications plan recently presented by the Minister to the Ad Hoc Cabinet Committee on Communications.

2.4.3 Managers

- The Government Communications Policy states that policy advisors and program managers are accountable for assessing their communications needs, allocating resources to communications and facilitating communications plans and initiatives.

- Requirements for communications support vary greatly from program to program in the department, and Industry Canada's managers bring equally varied levels of personal experience, concepts of communications and expectations of communications staff to their responsibilities.

- In interviews, managers demonstrated high interest in the subject of communications, considerable understanding of the pressures facing the Communications Branch, and a range of strong views about who should do what.

2.4.4 Sector Communicators

- Some 98 IS and four EX[2] personnel are employed in the communications units located in Sectors and SOAs. These groups also employ individuals in other categories (e.g. PM, CO) performing communications-related functions. Some of the groups were in existence performing communications or marketing roles prior to 1993, but most positions have been added since then as a result of independent decisions by program managers.
- The involvement of sector communications units with the Communications Branch may consist almost entirely of ministerial support activities, and even in this area they may often communicate directly with the Industry Minister's Office. The Minister's Office requires the sectors to coordinate approvals and activities involving the Minister through the Communications Branch. For some Sectors, this is virtually the only contact they have with the Branch. Others have much closer relationships with Communications, relying on them for a range of communications services.
- Some Sectors have more than one dedicated communications group. The Communications Branch finds that it is not always clear who coordinates the communications efforts within these Sectors when a Sector perspective on a specific issue is required.

2.4.5 Communications Branch

- At the time of the department's creation in 1993 some 110 communications positions were "inherited" from the four predecessor organizations. When the Communications Branch was formally structured, its initial Full Time Equivalent (FTE) complement was 96.
- Under Program Review, the Branch was reduced to 55 FTEs and its budget by 40% over all. Three positions (one indeterminate and two term) have since been added due to mandate changes – for coordination of Question Period cards, speaker support and website coordination – bringing the Branch's strength to 58. Some 36 of these positions are classified IS, and there are three EX positions.
- The Branch has only 2 IS-06 officers – a figure that is low in comparison to other departmental Communications Branches[3]. This means the existing management cadre is stretched thinly, reducing its ability to intervene on important files (e.g. corporate and inter-departmental priorities).
- The Branch has had six Directors General (DGs) and acting Directors General since 1993. Turnover has been high in other positions as well.
- Key players in the Communications Branch are the communications advisors, most of whom are classified at the IS-05 level. Each advisor is assigned to several program areas in the department, and most parts of the department have a designated advisor.

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[2]Some of the EX personnel outside the Communications Branch with communications responsibilities also have other responsibilities.

[3]See Annex C. In addition, since February 1999 when most of the information for this review was collected, another IS-06 has joined the Branch.

3.0 ANALYSIS

3.1 General Observations

- Managers across the department observed that branch staff are working hard under stressful circumstances. A number stated that the Branch has significant influence on overall departmental communications, although this was not apparent to everyone.

- Program managers with perhaps the best vantage points on communications across the department felt that, at its present resource levels, the Communications Branch is hard pressed to serve the communications requirements of the Minister and related responsibilities for corporate initiatives, let alone program needs and responsibilities for overall coordination.

- Senior managers in the Communications Branch told us their staff are working very long hours under considerable stress. They worry that, in the existing competitive market for effective communications officers, they will continue to lose good people and will have difficulty replacing them.

- In most instances, working relationships among communications and program personnel were reported as good. But except where they cooperate on initiatives involving the Minister, sector communications groups and the Communications Branch often seem to operate in marked isolation from one another. This is probably due in part to their different priorities. We also noted, however, that there was often a "we/they" attitude between some sector and Communications Branch communicators. Each group would like to see more support and cooperation from the other.

- No regular vehicle existed at the time of the review to directly share information among communications personnel across the department about the general direction of the department, ministerial concerns, or current issues. Where contact is infrequent, the sector communicators may operate without the corporate perspective; the Communications Branch may be unaware of important sectoral communications initiatives.

- No one suggested to us that sector communicators should report to the Communications Branch or that the Branch should control communications across the department. But many identified a need for better corporate-program linkages, more consistent messaging and more effective coordination of communications activities.

- There is considerable uncertainty about roles and responsibilities notwithstanding the efforts of the Communications Branch through their presentations on the subject in the fall of 1997 and their associated "marketing material". There seem to be two main reasons:

    - Programs' demands on the Communications Branch vary with resources allocated to communications and the individual program's capacity to plan and manage communications projects and activities on their own. Staff of the Communications

Branch therefore respond with varying levels of support. The roles of communications advisors in particular are quite different from client to client.

- N Written procedures exist, e.g. for news releases, TPC announcements, speech-writing, publications production and advertising, but they are not collated in print or electronically (i.e. are isolated pieces), or known to all relevant players.

- These factors bear on the delivery of specific communications services in Industry Canada, as discussed in more detail below.

3.2 Communications Services

3.2.1 Public opinion research and media monitoring

- The Communications Branch devotes one position, currently filled on a part-time basis, to public opinion research, which includes subscriptions to syndicated surveys and special surveys, piggybacking questions on omnibus polls, conducting focus testing on key initiatives, and disseminating results. In addition, advice and contract management services are provided to program areas as requested and as the workload permits.

- A number of senior officials were unaware of this activity. There was a general appreciation of the potential usefulness of information on the public environment and a desire for trends analysis and more sharing of results down, up and across the department.

- Program managers noted that there is no systematic provision for collecting, analyzing and sharing across the department the results of their individual, program-based research and feedback activity – derived from on-site contacts at fairs and exhibits, Internet discussion groups and on-line surveys, consultations, seminars, symposiums, round tables, focus groups and market studies.

- The "Hoover"[4] electronic media monitoring system, in full operation for three years, is managed by the departmental library. It is used heavily by some Sectors to maintain a watch on media coverage of their areas and to help them prepare briefing notes, QP cards and other materials.

- A hard copy of clippings is still prepared in the Communications Branch for the offices of the Minister and Secretary of State, the Deputy Minister and the Branch. A "hot topics" summary is posted daily. A weekly media summary is also sent out by e-mail every Monday. Analyses of the coverage of major issues are prepared from time to time as required.

[4] This system was replaced with another electronic media monitoring system subsequent to February 1999.

- Opinion is divided on usefulness of both Hoover and the "hot topics" summary. Several individuals called for more analysis of media as a support to issue management and communications planning.

3.2.2 Communications planning

- According to the Government Communications Policy, the communications function includes responsibility for:

> communications planning, which develops corporate and program communications plans responding to public concerns and integrating major objectives of the government, the minister and the institution.

- The policy describes planning in these terms:

> "Annual communications planning must be fully integrated into the corporate planning cycle of an institution. The planning process establishes the range of communications activities and the need for resources.
>
> Strategic planning is the first phase in the process. Strategic communications plans link governmental, ministerial and institutional priorities, which are the basis for all communications activity, and lay out the broad parameters of action for the future.
>
> Operational communications plans translate corporate strategies into activities and identify resource requirements.
>
> All plans are to be developed with provision for monitoring and evaluation, and for adjustment to changing circumstances."

- In our interviews, people talked to us about three types of communications plans:

  - strategic communications plans
  - plans for major corporate initiatives
  - communications plans for specific issues, initiatives or events[5].

Strategic communications plans

- Although the Government Communications Policy requires the preparation of an annual strategic communications plan by each department, this requirement fell out of fashion in the early and mid 1990s after the requirement to submit plans to the Privy Council Office (PCO) was dropped. PCO has now reinstated the requirement.

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[5]Communications plans for specific issues, initiatives or events that accompany a Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) must be prepared using a specific format and must be reviewed by the Communications Branch.

- The Communications Branch recently drafted a strategic communications plan based on the document *Industry Canada: Making a Difference – Our Priorities for 1998-1999*. Regional and sector communicators were consulted during its development.

- At the time interviews were conducted as part of this review (January-February 1999) some interviewees said they were not aware that it had been prepared, quite a few program managers said they had heard of it, and many said they would like to be consulted when such a plan is being drafted[6]. Many interviewees, though not all, thought there would be value in it. For example, a plan could show people where they fit in the overall work of the department and identify common messages.

- Sectors and branches could "piggyback" their own communications strategy on the departmental strategy.

  N For example, Ontario Region would like to develop its own strategic communications plan, linked to the departmental plan. CIPO is planning to draft its own communications strategy for 1999-2000, in consultation with the Communications Branch.

- We saw little evidence that, to date, Sectors have done their own strategic communications plans. Their focus appears to be more on the individual communications plan for specific events or initiatives. An exception has been the Year 2000 Secretariat.

- We were told by many of the program managers we spoke to that a departmental strategic communications plan should be integrated into the other planning work of the department, such as the *Business Plan*, the *Report on Plans and Priorities* and the *Departmental Performance Report*. This is consistent with the requirements of the Government Communications Policy which PCO is showing a renewed interest in requiring departments to comply with. There was a general consensus that this integration was not being done well at this time.

Plans for major corporate initiatives

- The Connecting Canadians communications initiative provides an authentic, easily grasped umbrella concept to package a number of related programs. It creates a platform for events, announcements, public enquiries and advertising that contributes helpfully to the visibility to the department.

  N Putting the Connecting Canadians communications strategy together has been a learning experience for the department. The concept was developed somewhat

[6] We have been advised that the Industry Portfolio Strategic Communications Plan of which the departmental plan is a significant component, was presented to DMB in March 1999 prior to its presentation to the PCO.

incrementally, funding has been disruptive and internal support has not been uniform. A public awareness survey demonstrated that the initiative has a long way to go to gain widespread public recognition, but it also indicated that the department is on the right track.

- The Connecting Canadians communications initiative is widely although not universally cited as a successful strategy. Interestingly, several groups claimed responsibility for its development – an indication they consider it a success. It is clear that the Communications Branch has taken a leadership role in coordinating this communications strategy.

- The Connecting Canadians communications strategy is corporate in that it is spans many programs across Industry Canada. Initiatives that require coordination across several *departments* can also lead to a requirement for "corporate" (i.e. trans-government) communications plans. The communications plan for the Canadian Biotechnology Strategy was cited to us as a successful example.

  N The Canadian Biotechnology Strategy involves seven federal departments and five agencies. The Communications Branch advisor worked closely with the Biotechnology Secretariat to assist with public consultations, coordinate interdepartmental activities, obtain necessary opinion research, and draft the communications plan that accompanied the Memorandum to Cabinet for the Biotechnology Strategy. The Director General of Communications and other members of the Communications Branch offered valued support.

- One suggestion was that corporate plans should be developed for each of the department's five strategic priorities, as was done for Connecting Canadians. Plans for some of these priorities – trade in particular – would be more complicated to prepare because other departments (e.g. Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade (DFAIT)) are major partners. These partners would have to be part of any process to develop communications plans.

<u>Communications plans for specific issues, initiatives or events</u>

- In a department as large and complex as Industry Canada, there are always numerous issues, initiatives and events on the horizon requiring communications plans. The Community Access Program (CAP), for example, while considered exceptional can nonetheless generate as many as one or two events a day.

- These plans are sometimes prepared by the communications advisors in the Communications Branch; sometimes by the communicators in the sector branches; sometimes by regional communicators; and sometimes by program staff.

- There does not appear to be any firm division of responsibilities for writing these plans. Program managers who rely most heavily on the Communications Branch for support tend to look to their advisor to prepare these plans. Sector communicators usually prepare plans

for their programs. The Communications Branch does tend to participate when initiatives involve the Minister including communications plans associated with Memoranda to Cabinet. The DG Communications must sign off on all communications plans for MCs.

- We heard a certain amount of criticism from both program managers and Sector communicators about the plans that are written by the Communications Branch. For some managers they lack creativity; are all produced with the same "cookie-cutter" approach; are too long; are too short-term and announcement/event focussed; identify "all the usual suspects" as audiences rather than zeroing in on key audiences; and fail to link communications activities to the identified audiences.

- Managers whose in-house communications staff prepare communications plans tended to be satisfied with their plans, perhaps because in-house staff are better informed about program issues than Communications Branch staff could be. There are likely other reasons, too: the sector communicators are probably more sensitive to their managers' requirements, less captured by the traditional format for communications plans, and at least in some cases better able to devote time and effort to an individual plan.

- On the other hand, Communications Branch managers say that sector communications plans often fail to demonstrate how sector activities connect to departmental, Ministerial and governmental priorities.

3.2.3 Communications advice

- The Government Communications Policy describes communications advice as the provision of counsel to ministers and management on policy development, program planning and implementation, and public issues. Advice is one of the core elements of the communications function.

- The provision of advice is generally coordinated by one or more designated Communications Advisor(s) assigned to a program area. The advisors in turn are supported by others within the Branch in specific technical areas (i.e., multimedia services, public opinion research, etc.). Some program managers will approach the technical specialist directly based on previous experience. This subsection focuses specifically on the services provided by the designated Communications Advisors.

- There are 14 communications advisors assigned to provide communications advice and support to the various sectors within the department. Program Review resulted in the elimination of four communications advisors positions and four support positions.

- Unlike in some departments, these advisors are not co-located with their clients, but work out of the Communications Branch. There are advantages and disadvantages to co-location with clients as there are with having all advisors located together (i.e., knowledge of client vs. departmental perspective; backup capabilities; balancing of workload; etc.). Co-location

would probably not be feasible for Industry Canada, since most advisors serve many programs.

- The Branch believes advice should be one of its primary roles, a view that is shared by many program managers in the department.

- There is no uniform group of advisory services offered by communications advisors to their clients. The services vary depending on the needs of the client and on the workload, interests and knowledge of the advisor. Generally those Sectors without their own communications group are looking for the provision of a broader range of services than those Sectors with their own internal communications group.

- The advisory services offered by the communications advisors can address some or all of the following:

  - liaison with Minister's Office for speeches, events and news releases;
  - governmental, Ministerial and senior executive priorities;
  - departmental processes and procedures (e.g. for advertising, news releases);
  - liaison with Communications Branch experts (e.g. media relations, publications, public environment analysis);
  - central agency requirements (e.g. Official Languages Act as it affects communications with the public, identification of government publications including the Federal Identity Program, representation of diversity);
  - contracting procedures and selection of consultants/contractors;
  - issues management;
  - crisis management;
  - media monitoring;
  - communications input into policy and program development;
  - communications plans for MCs, initiatives or events;
  - consultation efforts;
  - coordination, negotiation with other branches, or with partners (within or outside of government) on communications issues;
  - shaping of messages;
  - identification of audiences and communications opportunities;
  - Question Period cards, media lines, questions and answers; and
  - briefing of spokespersons.

- Managers are divided on whether the advice they receive is valuable. Many speak highly of their communications advisors, consult them regularly, and include them on their management teams. Others aren't even certain of the name of their assigned advisor.

- Some managers complain that the advice they receive consists of instructions on what they must do and not do – an example would be the requirement to meet Federal Identity Program standards. They say they want the Communications Branch to provide value-added, and not to simply serve as a gatekeeper. Some managers say advisors are not readily available to

them, or lack the communications skills that programs need (e.g. overseeing a major promotional campaign).

- For a small number of managers, advice on its own does not constitute adequate service by the Communications Branch. These managers want their "advisors" to pitch in and do the work – to produce communications products and manage activities. Some communications advisors do, in fact, get involved in delivering communications products and activities.

- Many people we interviewed noted how difficult it is for advisors to serve their large number of clients. They said that to be effective, advisors need to be familiar with their clients' programs and issues, but advisors cannot find time to gain and maintain this familiarity.

- The Communications Branch is not the sole source of communications advice within the department. Advice is also provided by the communicators attached to sector branches. For the most part, program managers appear satisfied with the advice these sector communicators provide.

- The Communications Branch believes that their advice is critical since it provides the "big picture". Many of the sector communicators say they in fact, look to the Communications Branch to provide them with this "big picture" so they can give better advice.

3.2.4 Ministerial support

- It is illustrative of the different understanding of respective roles that some of the managers interviewed volunteered a definition of the Communications Branch's role exclusively in terms of services to the Minister.

  - "...to support the Minister, and to support specific programs and services to the extent that they are seen as supporting overall departmental priorities."

  - "... to provide communications interface between programs and the Minister's Office ... to link ministerial perspective to program initiatives."

- It is clear that the Branch plays an important interface role, and gets caught occasionally in the middle when, for example, a program is pressing for a decision on the Minister's participation in an event and the Minister's Office cannot make the commitment.

- Underlying the sometimes-difficult and sensitive nature of this role, the Branch was described variously as the "gateway", "required route" and "barrier" to the Minister's Office.

Ministerial opportunities

- Identifying public activities and events with potential for the Minister's participation is a complex and difficult but essential exercise requiring assistance from regions and groups across the department, sorting of many factors by ministerial staff, and constant adjustment of schedules. Most throughout the department recognize this difficulty and believe that on balance the Ministerial Event and Opportunities Report (MOPPR) and scheduling process within Industry Canada works well.

- One observer characterized the preparation of the MOPPR as a "process that prevents good opportunities from being seized, " a reflection of the frustrations that can be involved.

Speeches

- The Minister, the Secretary of State and the Deputy Minister make numerous speeches during the course of the year. In 1998, the Minister made over 250 speeches on a variety of subjects (Connecting Canadians, Technology Partnership Canada, SME Infofairs, E-commerce, CAP, and proposed legislative changes relating to privacy, competition and telecommunications). The Secretary of State needed approximately 100 speeches and talking points prepared.

- Most speeches for the Minister are written by outside contractors. This effort is coordinated by two speech coordinators and a support person within the Communications Branch who also prepare some of the speeches themselves. Most of those we spoke to felt that the current process was working reasonably well recognizing the challenges and short timelines inherent with preparing speeches for a Minister. Some of those we spoke to felt that one or more in-house speech writers would provide more continuity and consistency in supporting the Minister. Given existing limits on Communications Branch resources, contracting for this purpose works reasonably well, and better than what we have seen in many other departments.

QP Cards

- A coordinator in the Communications Branch participates in identifying issues for QP cards, assigning them to be written by some 100 people in program and policy areas, and ensuring their delivery in time. Over 560 cards were prepared during the 1998-99 fiscal year, an average of over four cards a day when the House is sitting. This number does not include cards prepared for Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) requests. There is little opportunity to affect the content or add value to the process by for example, linking responses to the priorities of the department or by being better positioned to identify the specific subject areas for which they are required.

- Training for QP card writers in the fall of 1998 has been well received and judged to be worthwhile.

3.2.5 Multimedia Services

The Multimedia Services team of the Operations Directorate in the Communications Branch is a major service resource for departmental programs. This team completed 221 publishing and production projects during fiscal year 1998-99. Many of these projects were part of large horizontal or ministerially-related initiatives. Others were for programs that lacked the resources to carry them out independently.

- The unit charges the client 3% of production costs to coordinate a project or 4% of contract amounts when it facilitates the client's use of a Public Works & Government Services Canada (PWGSC) standing offer for writing and editing or graphics services. Seventy-two per cent of the total amount recovered is used to pay PWGSC service fees. The unit hopes to introduce new standing offers for January 2000 that will obviate the reliance on PWGSC.

- For similar project management, Human Resources Development Canada's (HRDC) Communications Branch charges clients 8% if projects are funded in advance or 10% on a project-by-project basis. Some $650,000 is thereby generated for investment in project-management FTEs.

- Under Program Review II, the Communications Branch at Canadian Heritage was cut by 30% over all, and its publications production and distribution, graphic design, audio-visual support services by 95%. Sectors were essentially left on their own for these services, although workshops were conducted on publications production and contract management.

- Over the past year, the department has strengthened its corporate identity through an exercise led by the Multimedia Services to rationalize the use of logos. In its response to a request of the Deputy Minister to review non Federal Identity Program (FIP) logos, 54 unique logos were collected, 32 applications were made for approval, and 11 were approved by the Deputy Minister for continued use within the FIP framework.

- Between October 1998 and March 1999, Industry Canada's SOAs and the Communications Research Centre (CRC), with the support of Multimedia Services, engaged in negotiations with Treasury Board Secretariat to bring their corporate identities within the FIP framework. In March 1999, all of the SOAs and CRC had their designs and titles approved by the Deputy Minister and Treasury Board officials.

3.2.6 Media relations

- The Communications Branch issues a large number of news releases, information bulletins and advisories each year. During fiscal year 1988-99 it issued approximately 270 news releases, 31 information bulletins and 82 advisories.

- Processing and issuing news releases requires considerable effort by the Communications Branch, often, we were told, with limited results in terms of media coverage. However, we

recognize that releases conform to government-wide practice and serve a purpose as an internal and external record of departmental announcements.

- The department uses an electronic news release approvals system with signoff at the DG level in Sectors. The Communications Branch revises the drafts as necessary and sends draft news releases in electronic and paper form to the Minister's Office with a record of approvals and distribution plan.

- In our experience, Industry Canada has fewer problems with releases than many departments, in part because of the relatively limited approvals required in the system.

- The department maintains a list of 200 spokespersons; media contacts are reported by managers to the Communications Branch and/or the Minister's Office. We found no major problems with this largely decentralized system, which conforms with preferred practice in the public sector.

- Many program managers have received media training. Departmental employees have access, through their desktop computers, to a list of approved spokespersons for major policy or program issues.

3.2.7 Advertising

- In the wake of the cuts, the Communications Branch is unable to actively coordinate departmental advertising initiatives but remains responsible for providing input on advertising into the planning process; coordinating the necessary approvals with the Minister's Office; and reporting as required to PWGSC. Communications advisors have also continued providing advisory services related to advertising initiatives. The Sectors who have the budgets for advertising deal directly with Gingko, the department's advertising agency, and with the Communications Coordination Services Board (CCSB) within PWGSC to meet the administrative requirements of the government policy on advertising.

- We heard of some problems with the approvals process notwithstanding an outline of roles and responsibilities in the departmental policy, concerns about Gingko's charges, and instances in which Sectors failed to seek ministerial approval or did so at the last minute. We understand that most of these problems have been ironed out.

3.2.8 Events

- Managers and communicators describe the management of public events as time-consuming and sometimes frustrating. Having said that, the department's events appear to be consistently successful.

- Most events are mounted by programs with the support of sector and regional communicators, and with the Communications Branch sometimes serving as a liaison with the Minister's Office.

3.2.9 Regional communications

- The department's regional communications capacity has been affected severely by staff cuts and a reduction in classification levels.

- The Communications Officers in each Region and FedNor who coordinate much of the communications effort within the Regions, face extraordinary demands to roll out departmental initiatives and support ministerial travel and events. They need to be experts in writing, communications planning, advising, media relations, events management, production and communications technology, among other skills. Most are classified at the IS-4 level and tend to report to a Director, Planning Analysis and Coordination (an EX-1 position). Several have no or very limited support staff to help them in carrying out their responsibilities.

- Almost all those we interviewed who have contact with regional officers were complimentary about their performance and commitment.

- The regional communicators say their interaction with the Communications Branch (i.e., weekly telephone call that was recently reinstated, twice a year meetings of the regional communications that the Branch tries to attend, Weeklies prepared by Communications Advisors on their projects) is helpful, and they would welcome more frequent contact with the Branch on strategic issues.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- From our review and analysis, we conclude that ***Industry Canada is fulfilling the primary requirements of the Government Communications Policy*** as indicated in Annex D. Although improvements could be made in the effectiveness of communications (see recommendations below), there are no glaring policy transgressions or gaps. ***We were impressed by evidence of dynamic and creative communications activity across the country, by external partnerships in communications, and the aggressive integration of technology in client communications.***

- Given the department's decentralized approach to communications, overall communications can only be effective with senior management leadership, individual accountability, clear and accessible procedures, close coordination of activities and open cooperation among communicators and managers.

- Even as we conducted this review, we observed an effort to provide senior-level input and direction to the department's communications through the creation of the Communications and Marketing Committee chaired by the Associate Deputy Minister.

- We looked closely at the department's central communications unit, the Communications Branch. The Branch is heavily engaged in Ministerial and corporate communications initiatives, but also plays a role in program communications through its advisors and its multimedia, media relations, distribution and enquiries services. We concluded that, ***at existing resources levels, there is limited room for the Branch to play a stronger role in coordinating communications or supporting program communications***.

- We found almost no support for a wholesale centralization of the communications function into the Communications Branch, nor do we think the benefits of such a reorganization (e.g. improved message coherence, possible economies of scale, closer adherence to policies and procedures) would outweigh the disadvantages (widespread short-term disruption, reduced on-site communications support for program managers, potential loss of existing dynamic communications approaches by Sectors).

- The challenges of the existing structure, however, where there is a constant ongoing tension between corporate requirements and Sector priorities, need to be explicitly recognized. In such a structure, everyone, both program managers and professional communicators, has a critical and important role in ensuring communications are properly coordinated.

- Our conclusions and recommendations discuss improvements that could be made within the department's existing organizational and resources arrangements. We acknowledge, however, that some of the recommendations would increase the pressure on the Communications Branch, at least in the short term. We also identify potential investment priorities for the Communications Branch if additional resources were to be added.

- In our view, Industry Canada can move closer to our communications model if:

  - all communicators act as information brokers;
  - the Communications Branch gives professional leadership to communicators across the department;
  - across the department, there is a more conscious use of the strategic plan to guide messaging;
  - more attention is devoted to the coordination of activity; and
  - the expertise in newer media in the Communications Branch is enhanced.

Responsibility: Communications Branch, with senior departmental management

4.1 Introduce a departmental communications policy

Introduce a departmental communications policy spelling out objectives, roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and communications procedures. Use the policy as the basis for negotiating service agreements in the form of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the Communications Branch and Sectors.

- Managers have important communications responsibilities under the Government Communications Policy. However, they need guidance from the functional experts on how to fulfill those responsibilities. They also need to understand the extent to which they can expect services from the Communications Branch.

- An Industry Canada Communications Policy could spell out the department's broad communications objectives; the communications roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of managers and communicators; and procedures for implementing communications projects (some of which already exist – e.g. the news release procedures). It could be produced in comprehensive and abbreviated versions, including a hard-copy desktop reference for sector managers.

- The Communications Branch could use the policy as the basis for negotiating service agreements with Sectors in the form of MOUs. Each agreement could be shaped to reflect a Sector's particular needs and the availability of in-house communications resources.

Responsibility: Communications Branch, with senior management

4.2 Ensure communications funding for new policy and program initiatives

Ensure up-front funding of communications costs in new policy and program initiatives.

- The format for Memoranda to Cabinet now requires that initiatives going to Cabinet for approval identify funding for communications. This helps ensure that communications units do not have to take on substantial new responsibilities without the necessary funding.

- This principle – funding up front for new policy and program initiatives – should drive the introduction of all significant demands for communications services, including those stemming from Treasury Board submissions and internal priorities. It would be reasonable, therefore, to also require review of Treasury Board Submissions by the Director General Communications prior to submission to ensure that communications issues have been adequately considered.

- Although this approach would do little to help the Communications Branch deal with existing pressures, it would help prevent them from getting worse. In HRDC, which operates this way, the Communications Branch operates with about 50 communications FTEs and $10 million in funding over and above its A-base for special initiatives.

- When program managers and communicators are working out funding arrangements for new programs and policies, they could also negotiate agreements on roles and responsibilities.

Responsibility: Senior management, program managers, Communications Branch

4.3 Strengthen the "communications community" within Industry Canada

Strengthen the "communications community" within Industry Canada by seizing opportunities to bring the department's communicators together as a collective resource to "connect the dots".

- Professional communicators are meant to be knowledge brokers who "connect the dots", and who identify linkages between program activities and the broad priorities and objectives of the government, Minister and department.

- Communications Branch communicators have a good sense of these priorities and objectives because of their close relationships with the Minister's Office, senior management and the central agencies. But their links with some programs are weaker than with others, complicating the task of identifying linkages.

- In contrast, sector communicators have close program relationships, but generally lack access to information about broad and changing governmental, Ministerial and departmental priorities. This limits their effectiveness as knowledge brokers.

- Both groups recognize the opportunities here. Sector communicators state without hesitation they would welcome information on priorities from the Communications Branch. And the Branch has already launched occasional meetings of sector communicators. It also has recently reintroduced weekly conference calls with regional communicators and attempts to attend regional meetings.

- Industry Canada would benefit if the Communications Branch could provide corporate leadership for all communicators in the department. It could do this by:

  - fostering the sharing of high-level information;

- identifying and supporting professional development opportunities;
- encouraging communicators to move between Sectors and the Communications Branch to enrich their work experience;
- pooling knowledge about outside suppliers; and
- providing formal feedback of any sector/regional communication effort (i.e., as part of a Sector focus day or input to 360° feedback).

- Program managers for their part, could be supporting the Communications Branch by doing many of the same things in the opposite direction.

- Potential vehicles could include:

  - a weekly report from the Communications Branch to all IS personnel;
  - more frequent (e.g. monthly) meetings of Communications Branch managers and sector communicators, focussed on substantive discussion of issues, priorities, trends;
  - regular Communications Branch participation in the meetings of regional communicators; and
  - the hosting of professional development events (e.g. brown bag lunch with speaker).

- These and other ideas could be developed and refined by a working group of branch, sector and regional communicators. To last and to achieve results, they would need balanced contributions from all participants.

Responsibility: Communications Branch, senior management

4.4 Planning

Prepare an annual strategic communications plan

Concentrate on the use of the strategic communications plan as a working tool to support corporate priorities and increase the likelihood of consistency in messaging across the Department.

- It is important to prepare and maintain a strategic communications plan demonstrating how communications will support the achievement of the department's key priorities as set out in the annual departmental business plan.

- The process of preparing the strategic communications plan can be used to negotiate agreement among senior managers on corporate communications priorities and messages. The plan will have credibility if it is based on broad consultation within the department and is formally approved by the department's senior management committees.

- The plan and the roles and responsibilities for its activities should be taken up with program and policy units in the department and with Portfolio partners. Managers should be

encouraged to reflect the broad themes and messages of the strategy in their own communications plans and activities.

Responsibility: Communications Branch

Model plans for other corporate initiatives on "Connecting Canadians"

Consider using the Connecting Canadians approach (i.e., the development of a corporate communications strategy for a Departmental priority) to other corporate priorities.

- The success of the Connecting Canadians communications plan suggests this approach could be used with other horizontal, corporate or inter-departmental priorities. Such plans, prepared by the Communications Branch, would add significant value to the department by:

  - helping departmental employees and clients understand the broader rationale for individual program activities;
  - providing coherence to often disparate communications activities; and
  - encouraging intra- and inter-departmental cooperation and coordination of communications activities.

- These plans would be logical "next steps" after the preparation of an annual strategic communications plan; i.e. the strategic plan could identify where corporate plans should be developed.

- Corporate plans could also be prepared in response to new or evolving priorities during the course of the year. For example, if the Minister or the deputy minister were to introduce a significant new strategic thrust for the department, a corporate communications plan could help the department redirect its communications activities to respond to the change.

- As with Memoranda to Cabinet, the department should ensure that plans are prepared for high profile submissions to Treasury Board. This would:

  - ensure important departmental initiatives are supported by effective communications planning;
  - alert the Branch to planned new initiatives with potential resource implications; and
  - offer communicators an opportunity to intervene with program and policy planners to recommend that funding for communications be included in requests for funds from Treasury Board.

Responsibility: Communications Branch, senior management

Redirect planning for specific issues, initiatives or events

Clarify responsibilities for program communications planning and adopt a streamlined "synopsis" format for the preparation of routine communications plans.

- Our interviews suggested that some program managers are dissatisfied with the communications plans prepared by the Communications Branch for specific issues, initiatives or events.

- We believe that, in most cases, communications plans for initiatives that have little significance beyond an individual program should be prepared by program staff, and not by Communications Branch advisors, who may be too busy or too removed from program activities to devote the time required to prepare effective plans.

- Communicators and program managers throughout Industry Canada may want to adopt a more streamlined "synopsis" format for the preparation of routine communications plans. We believe the Communications Overview form now used in Memoranda to Cabinet offers a concise approach that could be easily adapted for departmental use. The Overview form has these advantages:

  - it asks that linkages be made to governmental and departmental messages and campaigns, thereby encouraging horizontal thinking; and
  - it flags the potential for regional or provincial sensitivities.

Our proposed adaptation of the form is included in Annex E.

Responsibility: Program managers, Communications Branch

4.5 Advisory services

Focus the work of communications advisors on key areas of service and clearly identify these to program managers.

- At the current level of resources devoted to the advisory role, there is little Industry Canada can do to increase the amount of service to departmental clients.

- The quality of advice could be improved if the advisors focus on key areas of service. As part of its response to *La Relève* and its development of a Universal Classification Standard (UCS) position description, one federal agency has developed a model competency profile for communications advisors. This profile could be adapted for Industry Canada to clarify advisor roles and to strengthen selection, training and evaluation.

- The Communications Branch could inform program managers that advisors will focus on the on the areas highlighted in the profile, noting that it was the result of considerable study and experience in the government communications community. Managers could also be informed that advisors are simply not resourced to create program materials or manage program activities. Some managers would not be satisfied with this situation, but at least they would know what the boundaries are.

Responsibility: Communications Branch

4.6 Multimedia services

Develop a broader capacity for deck/new media services and increase charges to clients, using revenues to fund additional FTEs.

Increase charges to clients and fund additional FTEs

- The Communications Branch's Multimedia Services unit has an excellent reputation throughout the department. The experience at HRDC demonstrates that managers are willing to pay more than the unit now charges for quality services.

- Higher charges would likely reduce the workload pressure on the unit by generating revenues to hire additional staff, and by reducing the number of lower priority projects brought by program managers to the unit for production.

Responsibility: Communications Branch

Develop broader capacity for deck/new media presentations

- Although the Policy Branch produces decks and presentations for the department's senior managers, the Communications Branch produces them for the Minister. This service is of long-term importance to the Communications Branch:

  - it keeps the Branch close to the Minister's thinking on key issues; and
  - it encourages the Branch to remain current on trends in technology – which is likely to be of increasing significance to the communications function.

- It would be highly beneficial for the Communications Branch to provide a similar service for the Deputy Minister who is playing a leading role in capturing Industry Canada's evolving vision for key issues. In this way the Branch would be better able to be on the leading edge of the Department's vision and the technology in use today and in the future. The Communications Branch has a good base in these areas but it is fragile with only one resource dedicated to this area.

Responsibility: Communications Branch

4.7 Communications Branch priorities if more FTE resources available

If more FTEs are available, priorities are communications advisors, senior branch managers, communications research and support for QP cards.

- It was not an objective of this review to consider the reallocation of resources within Industry Canada, nor within its mandate to recommend an increase in funding or positions for the Communications Branch. We have observed that branch services could be improved with

additional resources. If new resources became available, we would recommend that the additional resources be targeted to the following areas:

- ***Advisors***. The addition of two or three communications advisors would allow each advisor to focus on a reduced number of programs. Advisors would be better able to meet program needs for advice, and better able to inform the Communications Branch about program priorities and plans. With or without new resources, however, we believe advisors should refrain from taking on substantial production roles (e.g. the writing of booklets, communications plans, etc.)

- ***Management***. There is potential for improving communications in Industry Canada by providing sector communicators with more information on corporate, Ministerial and governmental priorities. Sector communicators want this information, and the Communications Branch has access to it. But gathering, assimilating and communicating this information requires a substantial amount of time by senior Branch managers. The addition of one or two IS-06 communicators to share the Branch management workload would increase the likelihood that information would be shared in a timely, consistent fashion.

- ***QP cards***. The product could be improved and there could well be a net saving of resources devoted to QP cards if the Communications Branch was staffed to analyze questions actually posed in the Commons, identify issues for QP cards more selectively, and exercise some quality control on the style and content of the notes.

- ***Research***. Research is a core communications function, according to the Government Communications Policy, and an important product for many Communications Branches in supporting Ministerial and departmental priorities. With less than one FTE devoted to research, Industry Canada's Communications Branch is constrained in its ability to investigate and promote research opportunities within the department, and to pull together and assess research already being done by programs directly.

Responsibility: Communications Branch

Annex A

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Policies/Practices

- *Government Communications Policy*, December 1, 1996 (issued by Treasury Board Secretariat)
- *Guidelines for Communications Information in Memoranda to Cabinet*, October 1998
- *Industry Canada Guide to Advertising*, Communications Branch, April 1998
- *Industry Canada Publishing Guide*, Communications Branch, 1997
- *Industry Canada Style Guide for Writers and Editors*, Communications Branch, 1997
- *News Release Approval Process* (undated)
- *Policy for Spokespersons* (undated)
- *Question Period (QP) Industry Canada Guidelines* (undated)
- *TPC Announcement Protocol* (undated)

Communications Strategies/Plans

- *Connecting Canadians, Communications Strategy*, July 3, 1998
- *Communications Strategy, Connecting Canadians*, created 1998/03/23
- *Industry Canada, Departmental Communications Strategy* (undated draft)

General Information

- *1998 Industry Canada Agenda for the Knowledge Based Economy*, May 20, 1998
- Communications Branch organization charts
- *Communications Branch: Who we are, How we work*
- Federal Identity Program Exercise at Industry Canada, various documents
- Generic position description, Senior Communications Advisor
- *Industry Canada: Making a Difference, Our Priorities for 1998-99*
- *Industry Canada 1998-99 Marketplace Frameworks*
- *Industry Portfolio Ministerial Events and Opportunities Report* of January 13, 1999
- Multimedia Projects, Completed and Current, February 18, 1999
- *Public Awareness and Attitudes Concerning the "Connecting Canadians" Agenda*, Angus Reid Group, January 4, 1999

INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

Michelle D'Auray, Executive Director, Task Force on Electronic Commerce
Bruce Deacon, Executive Director, Technology Partnerships Canada
Serge Dupont, Corporate Secretary
Renee Harden, Director Communications, Industry Portfolio Office
Bob Hawkins, Director, Strategis Marketing and Business Development, CIO
Michael Jenkin, Director General, Office of Consumer Affairs
Vicki Kohse, Manager, Information Products, Canada Business Service Centres
Corinne MacLaurin, Director, Lobbyists Registration Branch
Grace Moores, Manager, Partnership Development (CBSC)
Kevin Shackell, Manager, Communications (CRC)
Bruce Stuart, Manager, Communications, Technology Partnerships Canada
Graham Taylor, Director of Marketing (CRC)
Gerry Turcotte, President, Communications Research Centre (CRC)
David Waite, Director, Consumer Information and Coordination
David Waung, Director General, Strategic Information, Chief Information Office
Susan Williams, Executive Director, Industry Portfolio Office
Howard Wilson, Ethics Counsellor
Mary Zamparo, Comptroller

Competition Bureau

Sally Southey, Director of Communications
Cécile Suchal, Special Communications Advisor

Industry and Science Policy Sector

Pardeep Ahluwalia, former Special Advisor, Knowledge Infrastructure
Robert Dunlop, Director General, Entrepreneurship & Small Business Office
Chummer Farina, Executive Director, Advisory Council on Science & Technology Secretariat
Andrei Sulzenko, Assistant Deputy Minister, Industry and Science Policy Sector
Marie Tobin, Director General, Innovation Policy Branch

Industry Sector

Roy Atkinson, Executive Director, Canadian Biotechnology Strategy Secretariat
John Banigan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Industry Sector
Lucien Bradet, Director General and Manager, Environmental Affairs
Ninon Charlebois, Director and Manager, Briefings & Strategic Management Group
Rocco Delvecchio, Executive Director, Investment Partnerships Canada
Helen Teeple, Director & Manager, Marketing and Promotion Services
Ron Watkins, Director General, Aerospace & Defence Branch

Operations Sector

Claudette Avery, Senior Program Officer, Marketing and Business Operation, Measurement Canada
John Banys, Director, Communications, Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy
Mark Corey, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations Sector
Lyse Couchman, Manager, ADMO
Christine Desloges, Director General, Trade Integration Directorate
Chris Endemann, Chief, Corporate Affairs, Planning, Interaction & Regulatory Affairs, CIPO
Alan Johnson, President, Measurement Canada
Monique Laurin, Director, Operations Directorate
Marc Mayrand, Superintendent of Bankruptcy, Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy
Tony McDonough, A/CEO, Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO)
Joanne Spanton, Manager, Marketing and Program Relations, Aboriginal Business Canada
Diane Vincent, Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations Sector

Spectrum, Information Technology and Telecommunications (SITT)

Michael Binder, Assistant Deputy Minister, SITT
Jane Carlisle, National Graduate Registry, IHAB
Manny Chetcuti, A/Director, Information Technology Skills Development
Connie Edlund, Director General, Year 2000 Secretariat
Doug Hull, Director General, Information Highway Applications Branch
Mary Marshall-Gardiner, Manager, Promotion and Marketing, IHAB
Helen McDonald, Director General, Information Policy & Planning
Joe McKendy, Senior Officer, IHAB
Mark Montreuil, Senior Information Officer, Computers for Schools, IHAB
JoAnn Myer, Director, Strategic Planning
David Mulcaster, Director General, Information and Communications Technologies (has since become REXD in Atlantic Region)
Keith Parsonage, Director General, Information and Communications Technology Branch
Jan Skora, Director General, Radio & Broadcasting Regulatory Branch

Communications Branch

Ken Armstrong, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Michel Bastien, Manager, Information Distribution and Information
Marie Bédard, Director General, Communications Branch
Manon Brisebois, Administration and Informatics Officer, Administrative Services
Lee Burrows, Co-op student, Corporate Communications
Patricia Burton, Director, Strategic Communications Planning
Pierre E. Charette, Inquiries Officer, Information Distribution and Informatics
Enrico del Costello, Director, Operations
Lorna Cunningham-Rushton, Manager, Corporate Communications
Anne-Marie Demers, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Brigitte Desmeules, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Peter Doherty, Senior Project Officer, Multimedia Services
Jenny Durrant, Editor, Corporate Communications

Alexandra Evershed, Senior Public Environment Analyst, Planning and Research
Annie Gauvin, Senior Product Management Officer, Multimedia Services
Don Harrison, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Carole Lafrenière, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Yves Lagacé, General Services Clerk, Multimedia Services
David Louden, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Peter Martin, Senior Communications Strategist, Planning and Research
Bob McMullin, Speech Coordinator, Strategic Communications Planning
Patrice Miron, Manager, Media Relations and Special Events
Charles Mojsej, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Pierangela Pica, Senior Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Lydna Rivington, Senior Speech Officer, Strategic Communications Planning
Ginette Robertson, Manager, Multimedia Services
Rob Stewart, former Speechwriter, now Communications Advisor, Advisory Services
Jennifer Yates, Senior Product Management Officer, Multimedia Services
George Zielinski, Executive Assistant to the Director General

Regions

David Dallimore, Director, Planning, Analysis and Public Affairs, Ontario Region
Bruce Drake, Regional Executive Director, Pacific and Yukon Region
Yvette Felx, Communications Officer, Québec Region
Glenn Fields, Regional Executive Director, Prairie and NWT Region
Linda Hann, Public Affairs Advisor, Ontario Region
Brigitte Hohn, Regional Executive Director, Ontario Region
Pierre Lemay, formerly acting Regional Executive Director, Québec Region
Frances McRae, Atlantic Region
Connie Moffit, Public Affairs and Marketing Advisor, BC and Yukon Region
Louise Paquette, Executive Director, FEDNOR
George Richard, Regional Executive Director, Atlantic Region
Brenda Tarasiuk, Advisor, Regional Promotion and Marketing Directorate, Prairies & NWT

Minister's Office

Jennifer Kealey, Assistant IHAB
Anthony Macerollo, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Sloan, Press Attaché

COMPARISON WITH OTHER FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS[7]

Dept.	Mgnt & Admin Support	Program Advisors	Enquiries	Publishing/ Electronic Services	Strategic Planning	Ministerial Services[8]	Regions	Total FTE's in Comm Branch	Total Dep't FTE's[9]
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada	14	38		9	4	23	14	102	5406
Canadian Heritage	6	12		4	9	18		49	4615
Environment Canada	3	16	4	11	4	5		43	4241
Foreign Affairs[10]	5	37		38	1	23		104	3806[11]
Health Canada	3	10		30	6	1		50	5969
HRDC	13	53	4	20	24	20	7	141	20074
Industry Canada	7	17	3	12	9	9		57	4892

[7]The comparative figures on the number of FTE's in the Communications Branch in other government departments was taken from the federal government's electronic telephone directory available on the World Wide Web.

[8]Includes speech writers, media relations, media monitoring and ministerial events.

[9]Based on each Departments Report on Plans and Priorities for 1998-99.

[10]Includes nine contract editors.

[11]The Department also employs 4,248 Locally Engaged Staff around the world.

COMPARISON OF SENIOR RESOURCE LEVELS WITHIN COMMUNICATIONS BRANCHES IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

	Industry Canada	Revenue Canada	HRDC	Natural Resources	Canadian Heritage
EX-3	1	1	1	1	1
EX-2	-	-	2	-	-
EX-1	2	2	3	2	2
IS-6	2	8	8	10	5
Total	5	11	14	13	8

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Reference	Requirement	Review Findings
1	Service to the public: Institutions must provide the public with prompt, courteous and impartial service that is sensitive to its needs, responsive to its concerns, and protective of its rights.	Outside of scope. Can only be determined through consultation with the public.
2	Institutions are responsible for integrating communications into the corporate management process. They must:	
(a)	ensure that communications staff, policy advisors and program managers carry out their shared roles in and responsibilities for the management and implementation of government communications.	Opportunities for improvement were identified.
(b)	ensure an appropriate distribution of resources between headquarters and regions in all communications planning and management.	Outside the scope of this study.
(c)	prepare a strategic communications plan, in conjunction with their Multi-Year Operational Plan, integrating governmental, ministerial and institutional priorities.	A departmental strategic communications plan was in development during the course of this review. Opportunities for improvement exist to better integrate communications plans with departmental budgeting processes.
(d)	prepare an operational communications plan that translates strategies into activities and identifies resource requirements within the operational budget.	Opportunities for improvement in this area were identified.
(e)	ensure that accountability is assigned for the approval of all communications projects	Appears to be working well.
(f)	inform the Privy Council Office of any adjustments to plans during the course of the fiscal year.	Not specifically addressed as part of this study. There were no indications, however, of any problems or concerns in this area.
(g)	assess the public environment in relation to policies, programs and major initiatives, and adhere to legal, policy and procedural requirements that apply to public opinion research and other forms of government information collection.	One part-time position devoted to public opinion research. While not specifically tested, there was no indication of noncompliance with the various requirements for government information collection.
(h)	monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of communications activities in relation to the objectives stated in communications plans.	No communications organization in the federal government does this on a consistent basis. It is rare when it is even done for a major communications initiative.

Reference	Requirement	Review Findings
(i)	seek the advice of the Communications and Consultations Secretariat of the Privy Council Office on issues that may have government-wide implications or require coordination	Not specifically addressed as part of this study. There was no indication, however, of any problems. The Communications Branch is in regular contact with PCO.
(j)	designate a single focus of responsibility for communications with the public when developing contingency plans for crisis management.	A list of spokespersons for all areas within the Department, is maintained.
(k)	balance their own communications, public opinion research and advertising needs with the requirements of the government as a whole, and ensure that work undertaken in these areas advances the policy interests of the government.	This is a priority if additional resources are made available to the Communications Branch
(l)	ensure that work undertaken in communications, public opinion research and advertising demonstrates the government's commitment to fiscal responsibility.	Not directly examined. Managers commented on the importance of partnering with others in these activities in view of costs.
3	Institutions are responsible for ensuring that information about federal policies, programs and services is made available or disseminated to all regions of Canada. Institutions must:	
(a)	respond as fully as possible to public enquiries, without unnecessary recourse to the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act*.	Not directly addressed as part of this study. As identified in the January 1998 *Review of the Enquiries/Warehousing Functions*, the Department maintains several telephone numbers for public enquiries and encourages electronic enquiries via its Internet sites.
(b)	designate primary spokespersons to communicate with the public, the media and members of Parliament	An extensive list of spokespersons is maintained.
(c)	maintain an index of published material or material available for purchase, and ensure that published material is available for examination by the public.	As identified in the January 1998 *Review of the Enquiries/ Warehousing Functions*, an extensive catalogue of published materials is maintained. The public may examine this material at 240 Sparks Street in Ottawa. Much of it is also available through Regional offices or Canada Business Service Centres (CBSC's) across the country.
(d)	make information available for purchase by the public where appropriate, and consider the costs of preparing and producing the information when assessing fees to users	Only a small proportion of the material made available by Industry Canada is priced. The basis for establishing the fees was not part of the scope of this study.

Reference	Requirement	Review Findings
(e)	reduce or waive fees or charges for information where there is a clear duty to inform the public as defined in this chapter	Not addressed specifically as part of this study. The vast majority of information prepared by the department is available at no cost, either in printed form or electronically via the Department's different Internet sites.
(f)	notify the Canada Communication Group-Publishing (CCG-P) of publications that they plan to produce, and where CCG-P and institutions agree that a publication should be priced, arrange to have it published through CCG-P, copublishing with the private sector wherever possible.	While not addressed department-wide, Multimedia Services ensures adherence to these requirements in the major publications it manages.
(g)	coordinate advertising and public opinion research strategies through Public Works and Government Services Canada. Institutions must pre-test all significant advertising campaigns to ensure that they meet their stated objectives.	The Communications Branch is unable to actively coordinate departmental advertising initiatives but remains responsible for providing input into the planning process and reporting as required to PWGSC. Sectors deal directly with the CCSB and Gingko.
(h)	make ever effort to disclose results, outside the formal resolution process prescribed by the *Access to Information Act*, of public opinion research. In the spirit of the *Access to Information Act*, institutions are encouraged to make the final report of public opinion research available within 30 days of receipt, and should only resort to the 90-day allowance if constrained by publishing requirements.	Not specifically examined. The department sponsors relatively little independent research.
4	Institutions must respect the equality of status of the two official languages as established by the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Official Languages Act* and adhere to Treasury Board policies and guidelines derived therefrom.	While not specifically addressed, it is clear that the Department is trying to respect federal legislation and TB policy in this area. Publications and media releases are made available in both official languages. Multimedia Services ensures writing quality is comparable in both official languages.

Reference	Requirement	Review Findings
5	Presentation and visibility. Institutions must	
(a)	pursue fair communications practices by avoiding sexual stereotyping in their communications, by ensuring representative depiction of all members of Canadian society, and by taking all reasonable measures to communicate effectively with disabled persons and with members of multicultural communities	Observed in projects managed by the Communications Branch.
(b)	ensure federal visibility by identifying their programs, activities and facilities in accordance with the Federal Identity Program, and, where appropriate, by arranging public events to mark significant federal initiatives or contributions.	Multimedia Services has worked successfully to rationalize the use of logos across the Department. Through the MOPPR attempts are made to ensure that public events are arranged to mark significant federal initiatives or contributions.
Roles and Responsibilities		
	Minsters shall	
	define the communications responsibilities of ministerial staff	Outside the scope of this study.
	establish clear lines of authority within ministerial staff.	Outside the scope of this study.
	establish procedures for liaison between institutional communications managers and ministerial staff to ensure that the communication of policy and operational initiatives is coordinated, with particular reference to media relations and participation in public events.	Policies are in place outlining under what circumstances someone may speak for Industry Canada and the nature of the information to be provided. Regular meetings are held between IC communications managers and ministerial staff to coordinate activities.
	Define, together with their respective deputy heads, their communications priorities, objectives and requirements.	Outside the scope of this study.
	Deputy heads shall	
	designate a senior official (referred to herein as head of communications) to support the deputy head in coordinating and directing implementation of this policy	The Director General of Communications supports the deputy head in this regard.
	strike an appropriate balance of communications roles and responsibilities among communications staff, policy advisors and program managers	This Review has recommended a comprehensive policy to address problems in this respect.

Refe ence	Requirement	Review Findings
	ensure the integration of strategic communications planning with the overall planning of the institution	Steps to this effect are recommended by this Review.
	ensure the development of an annual operational communications plan	An operational communications plan would be a next step once a strategic plan has evolved into a working instrument across the department.
	ensure appropriate distribution of resources between headquarters and regions in all communications planning and management	Outside the scope of this study.
	designate managers and specialist at headquarters and in the regions to serve as primary spokespersons in relations with the public, the media and members of Parliament on subjects in their area of expertise	Industry Canada maintains an extensive list of designated spokespersons.
	ensure that communications staff and spokespersons are afforded the training and professional development required	Spokespersons are receiving media training.
	ensure liaison and cooperation in communications matters with other federal institutions and central agencies and with other levels of government	Evident in the work of the Portfolio Office and in the regular dialogue with other federal institutions, central agencies and other levels of government. Objectives of the department require coordination across government.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN OVERVIEW

1. COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

[State precisely what goals are to be achieved through the communications plan.]

2. LINKS TO GOVERNMENT MESSAGES AND CAMPAIGNS

[Indicate what links will be made between this initiative and the department's agenda or overall messages. Or if necessary signal any apparent inconsistencies and show how these will be managed. Indicate whether communications activities can be integrated into any major campaigns or other major initiatives already underway.]

3. KEY MESSAGES

[Give the three or four key messages using clear, succinct language.]

4. TARGET AUDIENCES AND REACTIONS

[Identify the two or three key target audiences and their expected reaction to the initiative. State which aspects of the initiative will be accepted, which will be criticized and by whom.]

5. KEY COMMUNICATIONS ELEMENTS

[Identify the communications activities that will be undertaken. Summarize key roles (e.g. Minister, other federal Ministers or MPs, provincial Ministers, private sector partners, departmental staff). List pre-positioning activities, key briefings and communications vehicles used to achieve goals and sustain communications messages. Provide distribution plan for communications products.]

6. REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ISSUES

[Highlight any regional or provincial sensitivities related to the initiative, and indicate how they will be addressed.]

7. BUDGET

[Indicate the anticipated budget to implement the communications plan, and the source of funding.]